

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to analyze the feasibility of providing public facilities for skating and specialized biking activities. Skating/biking activities include: skateboarding, roller skating, rollerblading (in-line skates,) and BMX biking. (For ease of reference, most communities refer to their facility as a skatepark; a few do not allow biking.)

## METHOD

In order to report on the feasibility of providing a skatepark the following steps were taken:

- 1 Ten jurisdictions were directly surveyed and five of those were visited. In addition, one California jurisdiction shared the results of their research on six northern California communities. (See Appendix I.)

- **Key findings are:**

- The risk of exposure to liability litigation appears to be less than feared. Of the 16 jurisdictions for which information was gathered, there were only three reported liability claims. Of those, 2 were dismissed and 1 recent claim is pending.

All communities in this sample are very happy with their decision to build a skatepark.

For a skatepark to be successful, users must be involved in the planning and design of the facility.

Typically, the demand for a skatepark has been underestimated. Consequently most jurisdictions report that their facility is too small.

- **Biggest Problems** - ranked by frequency of response.

- The biggest problem is that the facilities attract graffiti. Most communities agree that it is not the skaters who abuse the facility.

Facility not big enough.

Maintenance of the equipment.

Maintenance of the surrounding areas. Skaters are messy/trashy.

### METHOD (cont')

2. Informal, ad hoc discussions were held with skaters, both in Albuquerque and in the jurisdictions visited.
  - Skateboarders have no place to go. They are not welcome in most public areas because: 1. Pedestrians fear being run into; 2. Skateboards damage public property: they chip the concrete edges of curbs and steps, and they flake stucco surfaces; 3. The skateboarders tend to look scary to people.
  - Despite their appearance, staff was impressed by the polite demeanor and considerate skating behavior of most skaters. Mostly, we were impressed by how much fun the skaters were having and how grateful they were for even the most limited facilities.
3. Data with regard to injuries related to skateboarding was obtained from the U.S. Consumer Product Association. Statistics are derived from a network of hospital emergency rooms. (See Appendix II.)
  - Nearly 97% of injured skateboarders were treated and released immediately.
  - Approximately 2% of injuries require hospitalization.
4. The Legal Department was asked to comment on liability issues associated with providing one or more public skatepark(s). (See Appendix III.)
5. CIP, Design and Development section was asked to identify suitable locations for a skatepark(s.) (See Appendix IV.)
6. Cost: Pending approval by the Administration, \$250 thousand for design and construction has been requested in the 97 Decade Plan.

### CONCLUSION

Based on this research, it is the conclusion of staff that a skatepark is not only feasible, it is desirable.

Decisions will be required about the number of parks, their location(s), and specific features and equipment that should be provided, but there is every reason to believe that, if a skatepark is built, it will be flooded with users.